

ACTION

April 8, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Dean Moor

THROUGH: Richard Sneider

SUBJECT: Douglas Pike

Miss Rebecca McGovern of MIT Press has sent you a copy of Douglas Pike's latest book "War, Peace and the Viet Cong" which will be published in May 1969. (Tab B) Dolf Droge and Sven Kraemer have prepared a brief summary of the book for use in your forthcoming meeting with Pike. (Tab C)

RECOMMENDATION:

That you sign the attached reply to Miss McGovern at Tab A.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

44-2-69

Dear Miss McGovern:

Thank you for your letter of March 31, 1969, and the copy of Douglas Pike's forthcoming book, War, Peace and the Viet Cong. I am looking forward to discussing it personally with Mr. Pike.

Best regards,

3/

Henry A. Kissinger

Miss Rebecca M. McGovern
Sales and Promotion Manager
The M.I.T. Press
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142

2 - Secretariat
1 - HAK Chron
1 - WH File

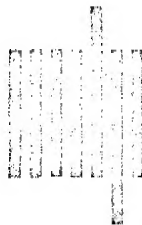
WH/DM/SFK (4/8/69)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

4/1

Dick:

Douglas Pike the writer of this
is scheduled to see HAK on Friday.
Joan tells me, however, the meet-
ing will no doubt be cancelled and
rescheduled for another time due
to Prez plans to Fla. Suggest D.
Moor ack. *See also chak*
note C.



THE M.I.T. PRESS

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, 02142

March 31, 1969

Dr. Henry Kissinger
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. Kissinger:

Enclosed please find an advance galley of
Douglas Pike's forthcoming book, WAR, PEACE
AND THE VIET CONG, which we will publish on
May 8th. We would welcome your comments on
the book.

Sincerely,

Rebecca M. McGovern

(Miss) Rebecca M. McGovern
Sales and Promotion Manager

RMM/sjg

DOUGLAS PIKE'SWAR, PEACE AND THE VIET CONG; to be published in May 1969

Douglas Pike, in his second book on the Viet Cong, presents an analysis of Vietnam's internal political anatomy, placing into the perspective of Vietnamese traditions, experiences and attitudes, prospects for settlement and three alternative strategies in contention among Hanoi's leadership today.

The Contenders -- Eight contenders in the situation are: the NLF, the PRP, the Alliance, the DRV, Communist China, the Soviet Union, the GVN, and the U.S. (Their basic objectives are described in Chapter One in generally familiar terms.)

Politics and Society -- South Vietnam's social and political milieu in which the struggle is being fought is deeply influenced by traditionalism, divisiveness, organizational malaise, clandestinism, and the problem of legitimatizing the distribution of power.

The Continuum -- Without attempting to predict the future a continuum is described to suggest several paths toward peace in Vietnam; within the peace via accommodation possibilities, the paths of formal public accommodation are contrasted with informal private methods.

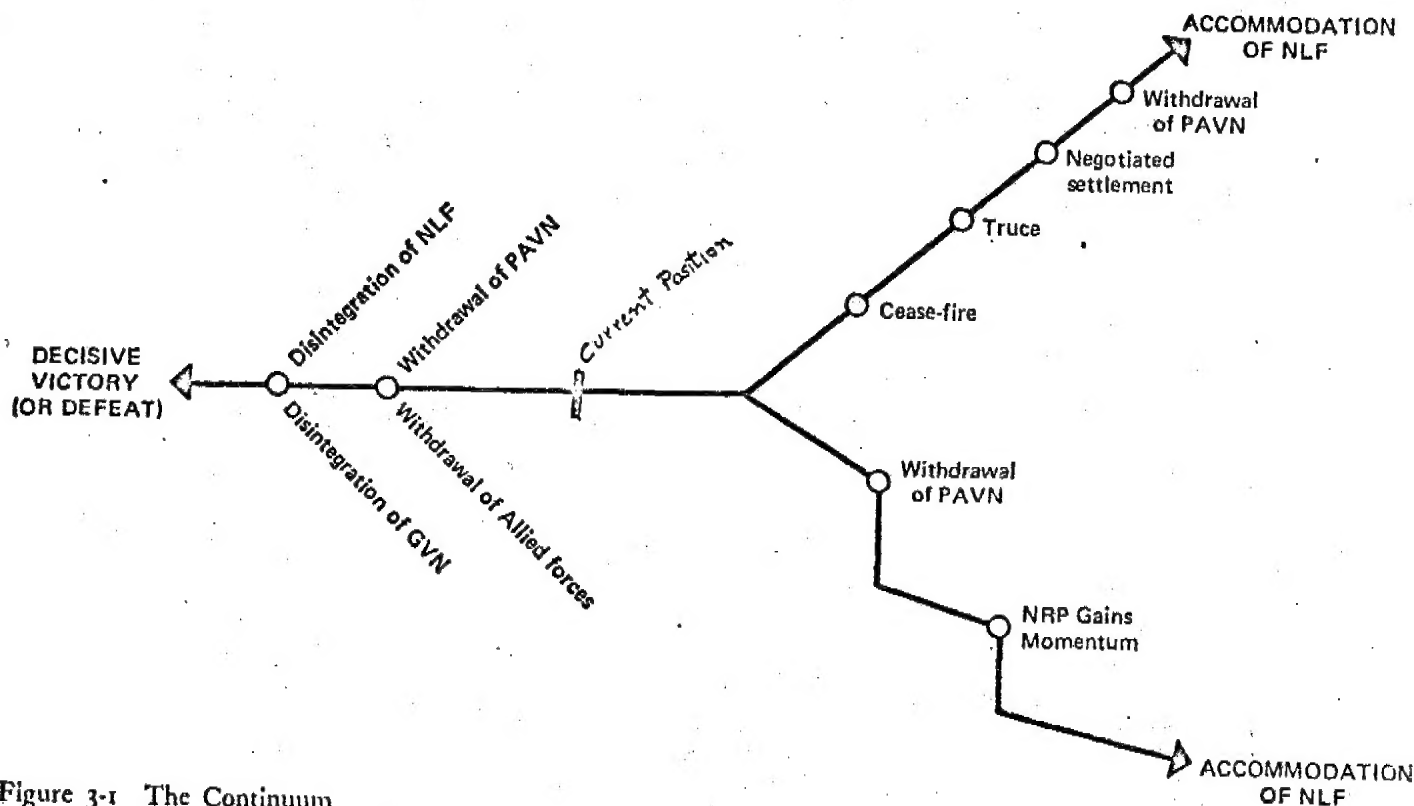


Figure 3-1 The Continuum

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Public Accommodation -- Between 1960 and 1967, the wording and the precise terminology of the NLF position on coalition government appears to have changed into the present frozen demand that no members of the present GVN could be considered as participants in such a coalition.

Private Accommodation -- Accommodation between individuals appears far more likely to be the path which the Vietnamese could use with skill and with the conviction that the winner-take-all/loser-lose-all dilemma could be avoided. The Malayan amnesty program is relevant to the Vietnamese situation. The GVN's National Reconciliation Program (Doan Ket) promises to become more important in permitting individual NLF members to reenter Vietnamese society.

A strategy combining Military pressure on the battlefield and an accelerated and well-coordinated National Reconciliation Program (NRP) could significantly reduce NLF strength. One possible scenario: -- mutual withdrawal of PAVN and U. S. forces reduce the war to pre-1965 level; defections of NLF supporters (not true believers) reduce the war to 1961 level; further competition, attrition and defection reduce the NLF hard-core to a hold out band fighting in on some areas of the countryside while the general population of South Vietnam is occupied with nation-building.

Communist Strategy 1960 - 1969 -- The Communists organizational weapon of struggle was based on faith in the Khoi Nghia (General Uprising) theory applied in conjunction with the Revolutionary Guerrilla Warfare experiences of the Viet Minh's anti-French effort. From 1963 to 1965 this theory appeared able to bring victory, but the U. S. response to South Vietnam's near collapse severely altered Communist prospects.

Following massive U. S. involvement, the search for a revised strategy produced the Interim Guerrilla Warfare concept as expressed in the Winter-Spring Campaign of 1967 - 1968. Insisting that the war must be won on the battlefield General Giap pushed for a quick and decisive strike. Yet the South Vietnamese army fought well, South Vietnam did not collapse and Communist forces suffered great losses.

Today the Communist debate on strategy is three-fold, as follows:

Regular Force Strategy -- Regular Force strategy (advocated by Vo Nguyen Giap) maintains that victory is to be achieved by the rapid application of regular military forces in South Vietnam with top priority

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assigned to weapons and logistics. This strategy's main weakness lies in its cost and in the fact that it has not worked. Its main strength lies in the fact that nothing better has been proposed providing an outcome which would guarantee Communist victory, unification and political power in the South.

Neo-revolutionary Guerrilla War -- (advocated by Truong Chinh) stresses belief that time is on the side of Hanoi and that protracted war will increase problems and contradictions for the U.S. The strategy's main strength lies in pressures it puts upon the U.S. Its main weaknesses lie in fact of U.S. involvement and in the strategy's inability to guarantee U.S. abandonment of Vietnam.

Negotiated Settlement Strategy -- (advocated by Nguyen Duy Trinh and younger elements of the Lao Dong Party) proposes that diplomatic and political efforts can achieve what the two military strategies discussed above cannot: i. e. the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam; once U.S. forces are gone, they will not return. This strategy's main strength lies in lack of success and high cost of present Communist military efforts. Its weakness lies in fact that it cannot be proven that the U.S. would not return, and in fact that the conference table path has not been a happy or productive one in North Vietnam's past experience and is risky especially with today's added Sino-Soviet uncertainties.

The Hanoi attitude toward negotiations is influenced by the relative degree of ascendancy these three strategies gain in the internal Hanoi Lao Dong Party policy debate. The first strategy would not rely on the conference table. The second would use the conference table as part of a talk-fight approach and the third would rest its major hopes on the negotiation gambit.

Prospects -- Short-range: a gradual shifting of effort from military to non-military activities, reduction of warfare, intensification of diplomacy abroad and politics in South Vietnam. The military disengagement will shift the emphasis to political confrontation within South Vietnam. A broader base for the GVN and a more competitive capability among the various social organizations could severely erode the NLF organizational strength and influence if the National Reconciliation/Amnesty effort has been attuned to the genuine growth of a viable and increasingly participatory political system which bridges the gulf between the rural and urban areas. (The South Vietnamese society today is nearly one-half urban and this

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trend is expected to grow more rapidly under conditions of peace and development.)

Long range: regionalism will predominate and North and South Vietnam will play roles in a new Federation of Indo-China including perhaps Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. Prospects for broader Southeast Asian development along the lines of ASPAC or ASEAN are stronger today than ever before.

Dolf M. Droge
Sven F. Kraemer

4/4/1969

TABLE 4-1

Summary Comparison of the Three Strategies

	Regular Force Strategy	Neorevolutionary Guerrilla War Strategy	Negotiated Settlement Strategy
Description of strategy	Quick victory, using small-scale and guerrilla war techniques. Great emphasis on logistics. Sudden, massive offensives.	Protracted conflict. Win at Stage Two with modernized guerrilla war tactics. Gnat-swarm warfare.	Achieve victory at the conference table and through political activities in South Vietnam. Guerrilla war makes a contribution.
Protagonists' arguments	A quick victory can be won by launching an ever-greater momentum of attacks, which are militarily and psychologically devastating.	To outlast, outwear, out-endure the enemy by military actions that never give him an opportunity to use his vaunted advantages of mass and movement.	It is impossible to drive out the Americans, but it is possible to negotiate them out, or get them out by example of withdrawal of our troops. Once out, they won't come back; once out, whatever else, our prospects will be brighter.
Antagonists' arguments	In a toe-to-toe slugging match the enemy's firepower will decimate our strength, because it is impossible to match his mass and movement.	This is a no-win policy. It permits our forces to continue to survive and exist, but it dooms us never to go through the gates of victory. Slow down a typhoon, and it breaks up.	It is impossible to win at the conference table what cannot be won on the battlefield. The conditions imposed by the enemy for a political settlement would be disadvantageous, if not disastrous.
Relevancy of logistics and outside support	Maintain maximum effort to sustain highest levels; match the enemy. Major outside logistic assistance required.	Opposed to symmetrical escalation; keep logistic demands to a minimum; be self-contained, self-supporting. Minimum outside assistance required.	Logistics and manpower demands low; less strain on all systems as a result.
View of time	Time not on our side. Must compress events in time.	Time is our best ally. War is a test of wills, a dimension of time.	Time inevitably will be with us; the force of haste will chiefly be in the other camp.
View of negotiations	Negotiate only a diminution of the enemy's military advantages (in firepower or manpower). Tactical negotiations permissible.	Negotiate to diminish the level or magnitude of the war. Tactical negotiations permissible.	Negotiate all, chiefly at strategic level.
Advocates of strategy	Vo Nguyen Giap; Ho Chi Minh; Van Tien Dung, Le Duan; "hardliners" in NLF.	Truong Chinh; <u>Le Thanh Nghi</u> , <u>Pham Hung</u> , <u>Le Duc Tho</u> (?) certain professional (nonmilitary) PAVN generals; the Chinese Communists; the few remaining original NLF cadres.	Nguyen Duy Trinh, Hoan Van Hoan, Tran Quoc Hoan; the "younger elements" of Lao Dong Central Committee; Southern elements of the NLF.